

# HOW TO WRITE A NOTE

## Lesson Objective

In this lesson, you will learn some helpful tips for writing short notes. You'll get a chance to practice writing a variety of notes, such as invitations and apologies. You'll also learn some tips for keeping your notes short and simple.

### Note

The word "note" can be a *noun* or a *verb*. It has a few different meanings. As a noun, it means *a short letter* or *a musical tone*. As a verb, it means *to record a short point in writing or in speaking*.

## Warm-Up

### A. Speaking

Imagine that you are in a parking lot. You hit a parked car by accident with your own car. Discuss these questions with your classmates.

1. Would you write a note to the owner?
2. What information should you include in a note like this?
3. How would you feel if your car was hit in a parking lot and no one left a note? How would you feel if someone did leave a note?

### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. informal       | a) an expression of regret (saying sorry)                      |
| _____ 2. apology        | b) casual and friendly   |
| _____ 3. correspondence | c) the date of a special event from a previous year            |
| _____ 4. free           | d) a French expression used in English, meaning "please reply" |
| _____ 5. BYOB           | e) as soon as possible   |
| _____ 6. RSVP           | f) available   |
| _____ 7. generosity     | g) bring your own beer/booze/bottle                            |
| _____ 8. ASAP           | h) kindness, a caring nature                                   |
| _____ 9. condolences    | i) written communication between people                        |
| _____ 10. anniversary   | j) thoughts of sadness for another's loss                      |

## Parts of a Note

Unlike a letter, a note only needs to be a few sentences long. Most notes have an informal greeting, a body (1–5 sentences), and an informal sign-off.

### A. Greeting

Here are some examples of written greetings found in notes:

**Examples:**

- Hey, Jane.
- Hi, Ivanka!
- Hello!
- Hi there!
- Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
(more formal)

### B. Body

The body (message) can typically fit into one short paragraph with a single purpose.

**Purpose Examples:**

- to inform
- to inquire
- to remind
- to thank
- to request
- to congratulate
- to comfort
- to express love
- to invite
- to apologize
- to keep in touch
- to wish someone well

**Message Examples:**

- Just wanted to let you know...
- Wanted to say a quick thanks for...
- Just a quick note to ask if...
- Just a quick reminder about...
- Don't forget to...
- Did you hear about...?
- We're just wondering if you'd be interested in...
- I wanted to tell you that...
- I got your note.
- Would you mind...?
- I'd love to..., but...
- Thanks for the invite.
- Sorry I haven't been in touch.
- I keep meaning to call.

### C. Sign-Off

You can end your note with your first name or even just your initials. Sometimes a note will close with a short line before the sender's name. Place your name or initials after the closing.

Cheers,  
TB

**Closing Examples:**

- Let us know!
- Hope you're well.
- Hope to see you next time.
- Cheers,
- Thanks a lot,
- Thanks again!
- See you,
- Call me!
- Talk to you soon,
- Talk soon,
- Miss you!
- You're the best!
- Later,
- Hugs,
- Keep in touch!
- Love \_\_\_\_\_

## Length of a Note

Keep your notes as short and simple as possible. Cut out any unnecessary words and use contractions wherever possible. Abbreviations and contractions help make a note feel informal. They also allow the reader to get the message quickly. A note should fit inside a note card or on a small piece of paper.

### A. Abbreviations

Here are some abbreviations that are commonly used in English notes:

Abbreviation	Meaning
ASAP	as soon as possible
RSVP	French phrase meaning "please reply"
W/O	without
PS	postscript (an additional note after the sign-off)
BTW	by the way
BYOB	bring your own bottle/booze/beer

### B. Text / Chat Message Abbreviations

Instant messaging is even shorter than a note. This form of communication uses many abbreviations. Which ones do you know? Ask your teacher for a full list.

#	Abbreviation	Meaning
1	LOL	
2	IDK	
3	B/C	
4	THX	
5	TTYL	

## Length of a Note cont.

### C. Contractions

Informal notes typically use contractions. A contraction is a short form of two words. What do these contractions mean?

#	Contraction	Meaning(s)
1	I'm	
2	I'll	
3	I've	
4	she's	
5	we'll	
6	won't	
7	we'd	

#	Contraction	Meaning(s)
8	isn't	
9	haven't	
10	didn't	
11	aren't	
12	can't	
13	you've	

### Task 1

Write a short note to a friend that contains at least five contractions and two abbreviations.

Hey, \_\_\_\_\_ !

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Cheers,

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### Common Errors

Be careful not to use a contraction when you mean a possessive word (or other word). These are some common errors to watch out for:

- they're = they are (not *their*)
- who's = who is (not *whose*)
- you're = you are (not *your*)
- it's = it is (not *its*)
- let's = let us (not *lets*, meaning *allows*)

## Types of Notes

### A. Invitation Cards

You can buy pre-made invitations for special occasions such as birthday parties and weddings. Fill out the details before giving them to your friends.

#### You're Invited!

**Event:** Stag & Doe  
**Date:** September 18  
**Location:** Bear Club Brewery  
**Time:** 8:00 pm – 11:00 pm  
**RSVP by:** September 10  
**Contact:** anna323@mailme.com  
 (445) 990-8890

#### Note:

Include some special notes to your guest(s), such as:

- No gifts, please.
- BYOB
- Please bring an appetizer.
- You are welcome to bring a guest.
- Casual dress

### B. Informal Invitations

You can also write informal invitations to friends, coworkers, and neighbors. You might do this through text messaging or with a short, handwritten note.

- Do you want to come over for a coffee?
- Do you want to come over and watch a movie?
- Are you available/free/busy on \_\_\_\_\_?

You may also need to decline (say no to) an invitation. You can give an excuse or just say you are unavailable.

- Thanks for the invitation (invite), but...
- I'm so sorry. I'm busy that day.
- I appreciate the offer, but...
- I'm afraid we're out of town.
- I wish we could come, but...
- We have a prior engagement.
- We're away that weekend.
- Can I take a rain check?
- Have fun!

### Task 2

Write an informal invitation to a friend or neighbor. Ask this person to do something with you on a specific day. Include a greeting, a message, and a sign-off. Then share your invitation with a partner, and write a note back declining your partner's invitation. Be sure to say thank you!

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## Types of Notes cont.

### C. Love Notes

A love note is a message of affection from one person to another. It can express romantic love or love between family members (e.g., mom to child).

#### Useful Expressions:

- I miss you!
- I love you!
- You are beautiful.
- You're the best!
- You mean so much to me.
- What would I do without you?
- I can't wait to see you again.

### D. Good-Luck Notes

A good-luck note is a message of hope for a person who is going to do or try something difficult or new, such as take an exam, run a race, or have an interview.

#### Useful Expressions:

- Good luck!
- You can do it!
- I'm proud of you.
- Knock 'em dead.
- Don't give up.
- Do your best.
- I believe in you!
- Let me/us know how everything goes.

### E. Thank-You Notes

You can send a thank-you note to someone who gave you a gift, sent you flowers, or did something kind for you.

#### Useful Expressions:

- Thank you for your generosity!
- I appreciate everything you do for me.
- You are so sweet!
- We couldn't have done it without you.
- I can't thank you enough.
- You're the best!
- Your kindness meant so much to me.

### Task 3

Write a thank-you note to someone in your life who did something kind for you in the past.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

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Thanks again,

Love \_\_\_\_\_

## Types of Notes cont.

### F. Apologies

A written apology can make everyone feel better after a conflict. Identify your fault and offer to make things better.

#### Useful Expressions:

*(Be sure to identify what you did wrong.)*

- Oops. Sorry I missed practice!
- Sorry that this is so late.
- I'm so sorry for what I said.
- I'm terribly sorry that I forgot to...
- I shouldn't have...
- I was wrong.
- You have no idea how sorry I am.
- Please forgive me for my error.
- I truly apologize for my actions.
- I hope you will forgive me.
- I'll try to do better next time.
- Sorry for the misunderstanding.

### G. Condolences

You can also be sorry for someone's loss or tough times, even though it is not your fault. If someone you know lost a loved one, express your condolences in a note or card.

#### Useful Expressions:

- My heart goes out to you and your family members at this difficult time.
- Please accept my/our condolences.
- Please accept my sincere sympathy.
- Our thoughts and prayers are with you.
- We are praying for your peace and comfort.
- Let me/us know if there is anything I/we can do.
- I am here if you need anything.

### Task 4

Complete this apology note for something you did wrong in the past.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I'm so sorry for \_\_\_\_\_

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Please forgive me,

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### Task 5

Imagine that a coworker lost a pet. Write a note expressing your condolences.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

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Thinking of you,

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## Types of Notes cont.

### H. Requests

Notes are often used to make a special request. These types of notes are often sent by email or text.

#### Useful Expressions:

- I have a big/small favor to ask.
- Could you...?
- Would you mind...?
- Is there any chance you could...?
- I need a hand...
- Could you give me a hand on...(day)?

### I. Reminders

Notes are also useful for sharing a quick reminder. Leave this type of note on a table or desk or send it as an electronic message.

#### Useful Expressions:

- Don't forget to turn off the lights.
- Remember to lock the door.
- We need milk and eggs.
- Walk the dog, please.
- Just a reminder that our meeting is at 4 pm.
- I just wanted to remind you that Friday is an in-service day.

### J. Special Occasions

Use notes for well wishes on someone's special occasion, such as a graduation or anniversary. You can write the note inside a card, on a person's social media wall, or even in a text.

#### Useful Expressions:

- Happy birthday, Lucy!
- Happy anniversary, Stan and Leanne!
- Congratulations on your new baby/job/home!
- Enjoy your special day.
- I hope your family spoils you!
- You have a great future ahead of you!

### Task 6

Write a text message asking a classmate to look after your kids on an upcoming in-service day. (Write it here or send it by text.)

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### Task 7

Now write a text message reminding your classmate that tomorrow is the in-service day and he/she agreed to look after your kids. (Write it here or send it by text.)

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## Notes Checklist

### BEFORE LEAVING OR SENDING A NOTE OR MESSAGE

After you write your note, proofread it. If you made any mistakes, rewrite it quickly. If you are happy with your note, mail it, or leave it on a desk, table, or other location where a person is sure to find it. You might also send your note electronically (by text message, direct message, or email).

- ☐ Did I spell the recipient's name properly?
- ☐ Did I print or write clearly?
- ☐ Does my note have one main purpose?
- ☐ Did I keep my message as simple as possible?
- ☐ Did I use abbreviations and contractions?
- ☐ Do my contractions have the correct meanings?
- ☐ Did I proofread my note or message?
- ☐ Did I include a short closing with my name or initials?

## Comprehension Check-In

Work with a partner and answer the following questions based on the lesson so far.

1. What are some reasons for writing a note? Name at least five.
2. Why should you use contractions in an informal note?
3. What three parts do most notes have?
4. What is the difference between *you're* and *your*?
5. If a friend lost a loved one, write a note expressing your \_\_\_\_\_.
6. What type of note do you write to a friend who is trying something new or difficult?
7. What does "free" often mean in a note?
8. What should you include in a sign-off of a note?

## Sample Notes

Read the following sample notes.

### A. From a Student to a Teacher

Dear Mr. Cross,

I'm very sorry I wasn't in class on Friday. I was very sick and didn't want to get you or the other students sick.

I know I missed a quiz. Is there any way I could do a makeup quiz?

I already asked Juan about the other work I missed.

Sorry again for missing class.

Tina

### B. From One Employee to Another

Hi Linda,

I stopped by your desk, but you were at lunch.

Just a reminder that you borrowed my headphones last week. Could you leave them on my desk for me? I need them this weekend.

Thanks,  
Hal

PS. Nice work on the new brochure!

### C. From One Neighbor to Another

Hey Maxwells,

Did one of you drop a house key? We found a key on the sidewalk. If it's yours, we're home tonight. Pop over or call us.

Hope you are well!

Cheers,  
The Millers

PS. Let's get together soon.

### D. Left on a Pole

**MISSING KITTEN**

My kitten ran away last night (June 3). She is black with white patches under both eyes. She's about 8 weeks old.

Please contact Naomi ASAP at (444) 889-9900 if you have seen her!

Thank you!

## Sample Notes cont.

### E. From One Driver to Another

Hello!

I hit your bumper when I pulled out of my parking spot. I am so sorry. There is a pretty big scratch.

My name is Juanita Leons.  
Please call me at 333-448-8907.  
I will give you my insurance information.

Sorry again!  
Juanita

### F. From One Friend to Another

Hi Alex,

I saw your post about depression. I hope you and your loved ones are okay. I have some experience with depression. Message me if you want to talk.

Cheers,  
Kendra

### G. Passed from One Student to Another

Hi there,

I'm Evan. Sorry to bug you. I don't know anyone in this class. I missed class on Tuesday. Could I borrow your notes?

Evan

### H. Slipped under an Apartment Door

Hey,

This is your neighbor from Unit 3. Sorry to bother you. Would you mind turning your music down? It's really loud in my apartment, and my kids can't get to sleep.

Thanks,  
Unit 3

### I. Declining an Invitation

Hi Pierre and Marie,

Thanks so much for inviting Luna to Ava's birthday. I'm so sorry Luna won't be able to make it. We are away that weekend.

Thanks again for the invite. Happy birthday to Ava. Have fun!

Tia

## Review

### Task 1

#### WRITE A NOTE

Handwrite an informal note to a classmate.  
Use contractions wherever possible. Use at least one abbreviation. Leave your note on your partner's desk.

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### Task 2

#### WRITE A REPLY

Respond to your partner's note. Use contractions wherever possible. Use at least one abbreviation. Check your spelling and punctuation. Give the note to your partner.

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## Shared Criteria for Success

Student : \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Level	Assessed By	Target Task	Skill
		<input type="checkbox"/> Self <input type="checkbox"/> Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Write a Note <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to a Note	Writing

Criteria	Rating	Notes
has a short greeting and spells the recipient's name properly		
is easy to read		
has one main purpose		
has a short and simple message (uses contractions)		
has an appropriate sign-off		